

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

September 9, 2008; 4:15PM
General Services Department
Combined Operations and Maintenance Facility
311 North State Street

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was convened at 4:15 PM in the Conference Room at the General Services Department Combined Operations and Maintenance Facility.

Present: Councilor Keith Nyhan, Chair, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Dick Lemieux, Councilor Bill Stetson, Matt Cashman, Melanie Doiron, Paula Mattis, Mike Russell

Staff: Councilor Allen Bennett, Chip Chesley, Bob McManus, Pat Winn, Tom Aspell, Jim Howard

Excused: Councilor Liz Blanchard, Councilor Rob Werner, Greg Banks, Jeff Myers

The meeting was convened at 4:15 PM by Councilor Nyhan.

General

Councilor Nyhan opened the meeting and welcomed the new appointees to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. He noted there are two remaining vacancies on the committee which, by City Ordinance, are to be filled by businesses that are located within the Downtown Solid Waste District. He reviewed that meetings are scheduled to begin at 4:15 PM and would like to keep meetings to an hour and half, if practical. He then requested individuals to introduce themselves to the group.

Review and Approve Minutes of August 19, 2008

Councilor Nyhan stated that the minutes from the meeting of August 19, 2008, had been distributed. He asked if there were any comments or questions. Hearing none, he noted a motion would be appropriate. Councilor Keach moved to accept the minutes, Councilor Lemieux second the motion; the motion carried.

Pay As You Throw Discussion

Chip reviewed with the committee that alternative methods to fund solid waste services is part of the work that staff is pursuing as it relates to the Solid Waste

Master Plan completed by DSM Environmental. He noted that the City took a leadership role in the mid-eighties when faced with closing their sanitary landfill and assisted in the development of the Concord Regional Resource Recovery Corporation, more commonly called, the Concord Co-op, to develop a long term solution to the region's solid waste needs.

The Co-op is made up of twenty seven municipalities and entered into a twenty year agreement with Wheelabrator Technologies to design, construct, and operate a waste to energy facility in Penacook which expires in 2009.

Chip noted at the time of the development of the plant, Federal law obligated utility companies to purchase energy from alternate energy producers, such as low head hydroelectric dams, wood chip power plants, and waste to energy facilities, at a price that was generally higher than the utility could generate power using conventional fuel sources. He further noted that the rate the Penacook Waste to Energy Facility is relatively attractive from the facility's viewpoint and this helps to financially support the plant.

Chip noted that the Co-op negotiated a five year extension to the agreement through 2014 while concurrently pursuing permitting a landfill in Canterbury. The Co-op withdrew the permit application upon completing those negotiations. It is expected the tip fee will increase to approximately \$ 60. The current tip fee is about \$45.

Chip reviewed that the city is facing two significant issues that will impact solid waste in the immediate future; (1) a substantial increase in the tip fee charged by Wheelabrator Technologies that will adversely impact both revenues and expenses in the FY 10 budget , and (2) the elimination of the ability to dispose leaf and yard waste at the Penacook Waste to Energy Facility effective June 30, 2009, that could also adversely impact the FY 10 budget.

Chip noted the briefing paper on Pay As You Throw was presented by DSM Environmental at the last committee meeting and that he had forwarded a copy of the paper to the new members along with a copy of the last meeting minutes.

From that meeting, he noted there were three items that staff was requested to prepare.

1. In response to a schedule outlining task associated with implementing Pay As You Throw should the City elect this alternative, Chip presented and distributed a detailed schedule which reflects the steps that would need to be taken for the City to consider PAYT so that it could be in place next Fiscal Year. Key milestones within the schedule include presentations before FPAC, a Report to Council advising of user fee options to fund solid waste, an educational element to be implemented prior to Council's consideration of an user fee system, City Ordinance revisions,

- procurement of solid waste and recycling contracts, and implementation of the program.
2. In reference to alternate leaf and yard waste programs in response to State law which will prohibit the delivery of leaf and yard waste to the Penacook Waste to Energy Facility after July 1, 2009, Chip presented a short briefing paper on three alternates: (1) City to collect leaf and yard waste in biodegradable bags for composting at the Fort Eddy Road site, (2) Contractor to collect leaf and yard waste in biodegradable bags for composting at the Fort Eddy Road site, and (3) City not to provide any collection services requiring residents to bring their leaf and yard waste to the Fort Eddy Road site for composting. The discussion noted that it would not make sense to have City forces provide the collection services. A weekly collection program would eliminate the current issue that exists with the fall bulk leaf collection program where City forces may only pass by a resident's house once. A copy of the paper is attached.
 3. In reference to the inquiry regarding the necessary diversion to cover the cost of the anticipated increase in solid waste costs, GSD staff reported that residential curbside recycling program currently recycles about 15 % of their waste and that this would need to increase at least three fold. In addition, there would need to be an aggressive recycling program provided to the City's residential containerized program.

The committee then discussed various topics regarding Pay As You Throw. Due to the increase cost the City is facing relative to the new contract between the Co-op and Wheelabrator, committee members noted that Pay As You Throw may be a means to contain the growth in the tax rate rather than to lower taxes. Councilor Lemieux recalled his personal experience living in California where residents would reduce their demand for water service when they are charged for the service and when residents are not charged for a service there is little economic incentive to reduce demand. In response to inquiries about why not having the general fund support the increase in the solid waste cost, Jim Howard noted that every additional \$ 275,000 of general fund spending generally increases the tax rate about one percent. Councilor Nyhan recalled that the current budget increased general fund expenditures about \$ 390,000; with the drop in revenues, the City tax rate increased 5.4%. Melanie Doiron noted her personal experience in Nova Scotia where it is possible to reduce solid waste volumes, and also spoke about the province using prescribed carts. The committee discussed the relative recent proposal to use carts in Concord that was not well received by the general public. GSD staff noted that it would be their recommendation to use a bag system, instead of a sticker system, should the City elect to adopt a Pay As You Throw system for the reasons DSM had articulated at the previous meeting.

Noting the time, Councilor Nyhan noted that the committee should move onto Item 4, Centerpoint Church request of a solid waste fee adjustment.

Centerpoint Church Request for Solid Waste Fee Adjustment

Councilor Nyhan recognized Councilor Bennett. Councilor Bennett noted that he had been contacted by the church relative to the cost they were incurring for solid waste services. He noted that the church raised the issue since the school is no longer present at this location having moved to the Heights and their solid waste volumes have dropped significantly. The committee discussed the basis of the Downtown Solid Waste District is to aggregate the service for the various properties within the district to gain certain benefits of economic of scale and prorate the cost of the service based upon their assessed value. Jim Howard noted that there had been much improvement in the handling of solid waste in the downtown area since the district was formed. While performing research relative to Pay-as-You-Throw, GSD staff discovered that the church was not originally in the district, but had petitioned to be included. Councilor Bennett noted that they are the only church in the district. Committee members raised concerns that exempting the church may be precedent for other non-profits within the district. The committee agreed not to recommend granting an adjustment to Centerpoint Church, and requested GSD staff to prepare a Report to Council reflecting their recommendation.

Concord Co-op Single Stream Recycling Facility Status Report

Chip reported that the Joint Board of the Co-op had voted to pursue purchasing an option for a site in Concord for the Single Stream Recycling Facility the Co-op is currently pursuing.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM. The members tentatively agreed to have the next meeting on Tuesday, September 216, at 4:15, at the COMF, and agreed to meet biweekly thereafter.